

October 20, 2005

Animal_ID_publicmtg@aphis.usda.gov

RE: Kansas Livestock Association Comments on Privatization of Animal Movement Tracking Database

Dear Sir or Madam:

The Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) is pleased to submit comments on USDA's proposal to develop a private animal movement tracking database for the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). KLA is a trade association representing nearly 6,000 members involved in all segments of the beef production system, including cow-calf producers, seedstock suppliers, stocker operators, cattle feeders and feedyard owners. The beef industry is a key component of the Kansas economy, generating over \$5.6 billion in cash receipts during 2004.

KLA members are keenly interested in the development of a uniform national identification system for cattle. Our animal ID working group has met several times over the last 18 months to consider this important issue. KLA members have approved policy supporting a national animal identification system capable of rapid traceback in the event of an animal disease outbreak. KLA policy also supports an identification system that optimizes the role of the private sector and protects producer confidentiality.

Cattle producers are concerned about the U.S. beef industry's ability to rapidly conduct epidemiological investigations. They also are interested in the ability to efficiently add value to their cattle by verifying origin, age, production practices and other key information being sought by the marketplace. We believe a national identification system must address both animal health and verification needs. Our members believe a public-private partnership is the best approach for this effort.

KLA strongly supports the plan to form a multi-species consortium of affected industries to develop and manage the animal movement tracking database portion of the NAIS. We believe this type of approach best serves the interests of cattle producers. The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) has taken the lead in moving this idea forward. NCBA is working to rapidly develop an animal movement tracking system with plans to turn control over to an independent, multi-species consortium.

NCBA is pursuing the support of other industry groups for this multi-species consortium. KLA asks USDA to support this effort and encourage participation of other groups.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas Toll". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "T" and a cursive "Toll".

Thomas Toll
President